THE FOLKESTONE TROPHY

Alex Henshaw's Percival Mew Gull Wins Cinque Ports Club's Internationally Supported and Well-organised Race

(Illustrated with "Flight" photographs)

ANY commentary on last Saturday's Folkestone event must fairly contain a hearty pat on the back for the handicappers. Because they were responsible, with officials of the Cinque Ports Flying Club, and others, for engineering, despite dull weather, as good an air race as one could wish to see, the honour of first mention seems rightfully theirs.

A representative entry of nineteen machines were divided into two heats, the five leaders in each qualifying for the final.

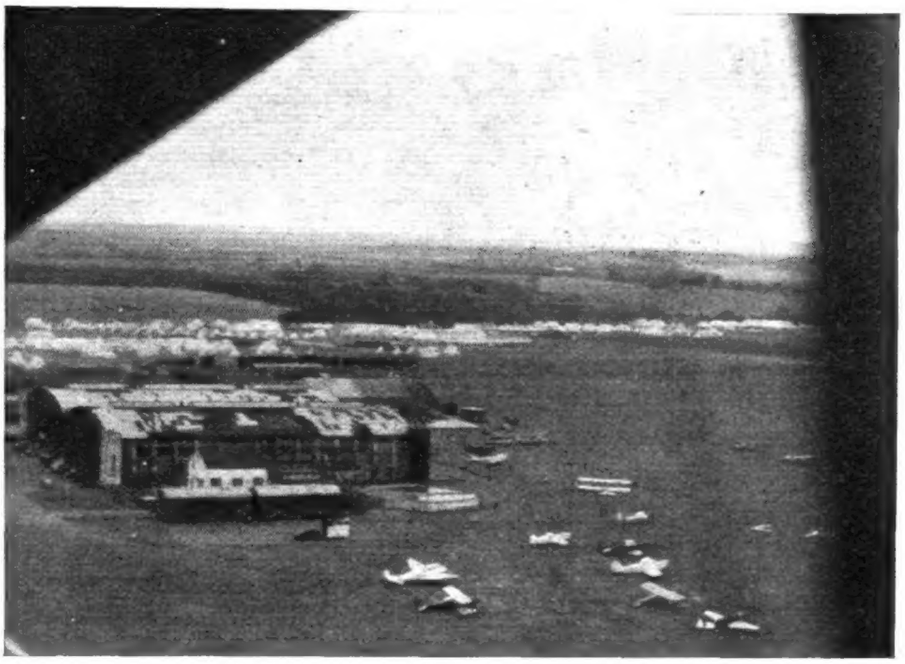
The first heat was run at about 12 noon, when ten machines were led off by a Dart Kitten, entered at the last minute and flown by Mr. C. G. M. Alington. He received 25 minutes 28 seconds start from the scratch man, Mr. Alex. Henshaw, flying his white Mew Gull.

The Lympne circuit is a very suitable one for a friendly club race, and it is possible to follow the progress of the competitors nearly all the way round to Capel Shed, Harbour pier, Hythe gasholder and back to Lympne, a distance of just under 20 miles. The race is over three laps of this course.

A fresh easterly wind faced the competitors at the take-off, after which they at once turned through about 60 deg. round a marking point and headed for Folkestone. From the racing point of view it was a monoplane day.

Mr. Henshaw's Mew Gull was only just off at the first turn, which he skimmed round at zero altitude before disappearing, apparently underground, for the fields near the aerodrome drop steeply down to the marshes and sea shore. He was last to be seen, a white speck popping up over some distant trees. Some of the others in the heat had already completed a lap before the Mew Gull started. Mr. E. A. H. Peat's Moth Major and Mr. R. M. Hackney's Gipsy Moth, squeezing the last ounce from their four cylinders, certainly saved time in their tight vertical turns round the mark.

Time for the finish was heralded by a lull as the machines all closed up on each other on their last lap. Then over the trees came the Hendy Hobo, entered by Mrs. Bill Davids and flown by Mr. A. J. S. Morris; hard on his tail could be seen the Moth Major and the Mew Gull, travelling at a terrific bat. The Hobo was going too well, however, and crossed the line seven seconds ahead of the Mew Gull, with the Moth a close third. The Dart Kitten purred in fourth, followed by Comper Swift and Gipsy Moth. Unfortunately, it turned out that the Comper, fifth across the line, had not obeyed take-off instructions and had to be disqualified, giving the Moth fifth place.



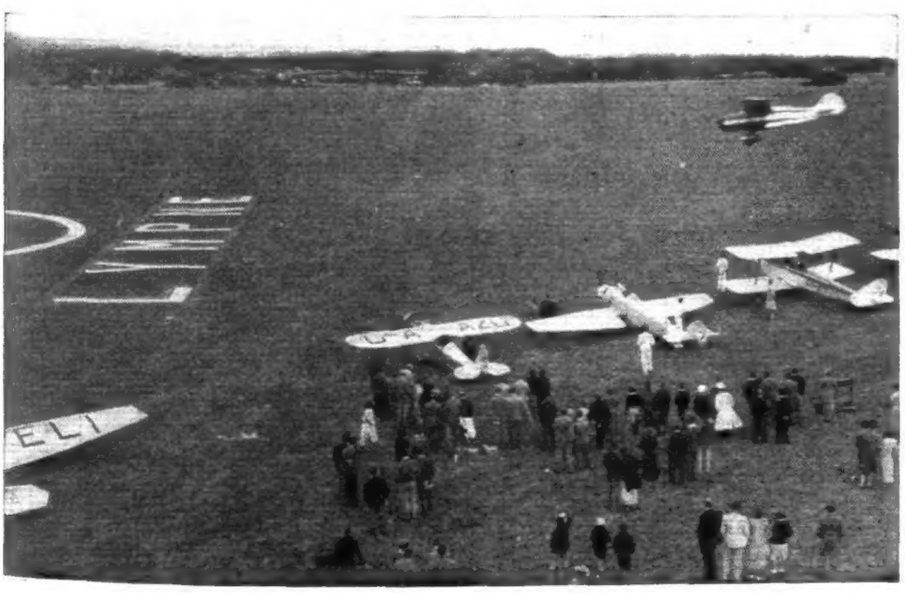
After a successful meeting, a few machines sit outside while their masters sample Cinque Ports hospitality.

The Dutch De Schelde, a roomy, low-winged cabin monoplane, slightly suggestive of a cleaned-up Spartan Cruiser with one engine, was unfortunately eliminated.

After lunch the second heat was run. This time Mr. Geoffrey de Havilland was limit man on the T.K.2, giving 17 min. 26 sec. start to Mr. Palmer on the Swallow. Another late entry, a Vega Gull, and Mr. Walters' handsome Miles Hawk Major, were also near limit, handicapped for about 140 m.p.h.

Three German entries, two Klemm K35s and a Fieseler, all powered by 70-80 h.p. Hirth engines, also flew in Heat 2. The Fieseler is a little smaller and gave the Klemms 28 seconds start. Results showed this to be a mistake, for the Fieseler, which is specially built for aerobatics, proved a little slower. A lunch-time panic that the Germans would not fly because the handicap was too heavy eventually simmered down amicably.

As the finish of the heat drew near, two machines were again to be seen approaching almost together over the trees. Instructor K. K. Brown's Tiger Moth leading Flt.-Lt. Tommy Rose on the B.A. Eagle. It looked as though a dead heat was to result when the Eagle, some ten lengths behind, skimmed over the boundary trimming hedge and long grass, but level with the first spectators it passed the Moth and finished three seconds ahead. The T.K.2, which had been racing superbly, crossed the line third. Herr Matthaei's Klemm came fourth, while Mr. Walters' Hawk Major, finishing fifth, was the last to qualify for the final. The Hawk appeared to lose



Between heats and final mechanics tinkered, while spectators watched demonstrations of the Wicko, seen flying above, the Porterfield "70" and the German Fieseler with 70 h.p. Hirth engine.